SharpSchool
helping schools succeed

User Guide

Chapter 16

Newsletters

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Introduction

SharpSchool's *Newsletter* feature helps schools keep parents, faculty, and the community informed by simplifying the process of sending electronic newsletters.

The purpose of the Newsletter functionality is to keep users updated on a range of activities from routine news and events to special announcements to messages for parents. Any user may subscribe, or be subscribed, to a newsletter. This can be especially useful for both districts and schools.

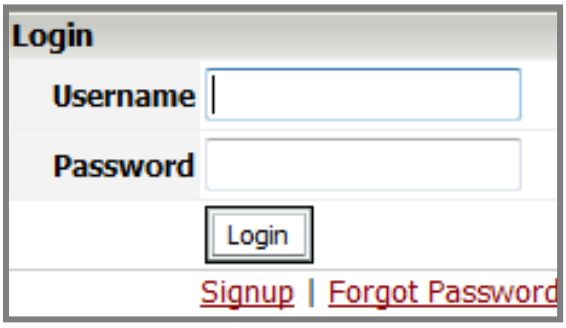
An example of when the newsletter module is useful for a school or district is in the event of school closure due to inclement weather.

The advantage of having parents and students as subscribers is that they do not have to go to the website to check for an update. Your newsletter messages will be delivered directly to their e-mail inbox.

Newsletters can be accessed by adding **/newsletter** to your school or district's URL. For example, a school with the URL **http://www.sharpschool.com** would access newsletters by going to **http://www.sharpschool.com/newsletter**. By default, all users can view newsletters. However modifications can only be made by authenticated users.

Key Information

In order to create a newsletter, you must first log into your site using a Username and Password.

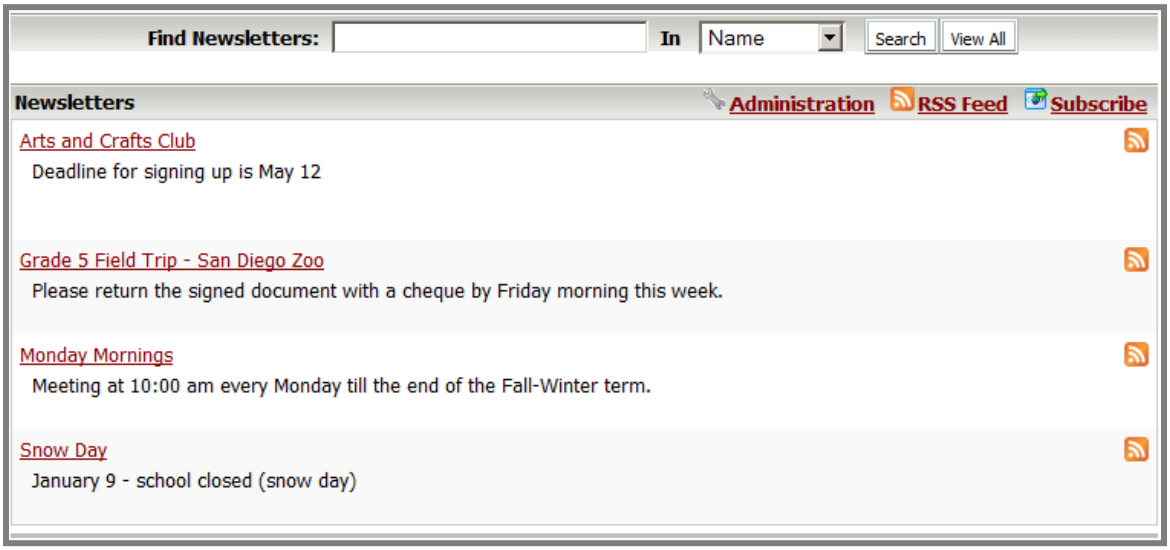


1) If you have not yet registered with the site you can request access by clicking on the **Signup** button. This will prompt you to create a profile which is automatically routed to an administrator for approval.

Note: If you do not see the **Signup** link your site's administrators may have removed it.

2) If you have already registered but have forgotten your password, simply click on **Forgot Password** to retrieve it.

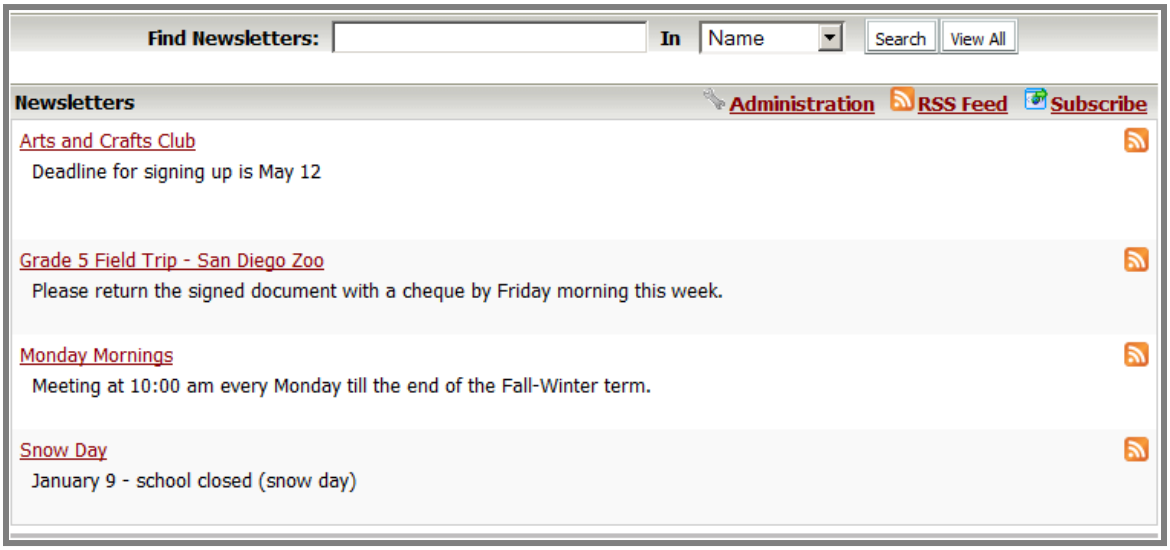
Logging into newsletters will take you to the following page:


Find Newsletters:
In
Name
Search
View All
Newsletters
Administration
RSS Feed
Subscribe
Arts and Crafts Club
Deadline for signing up is May 12
Grade 5 Field Trip - San Diego Zoo
Please return the signed document with a cheque by Friday morning this week.
Monday Mornings
Meeting at 10:00 am every Monday till the end of the Fall-Winter term.
Snow Day
January 9 - school closed (snow day)

Administration

Once you are on the Newsletter page, click on the **Administration** link. This can be found on the title bar of the **Newsletters** box with the icon.

Note: Only administrators and users who have been granted administrator access to the newsletter will be able to see or access the Administration link.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Monday Mornings
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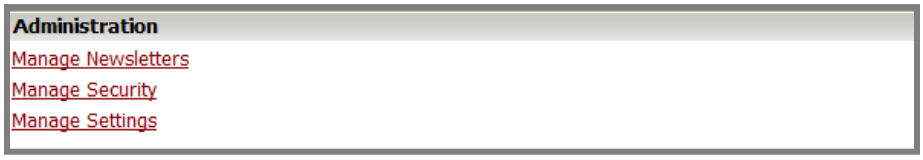
January 9 - school closed (snow day)

On the Administration page, you will see three options:

1) Manage Newsletters

2) Manage Security

3) Manage Settings



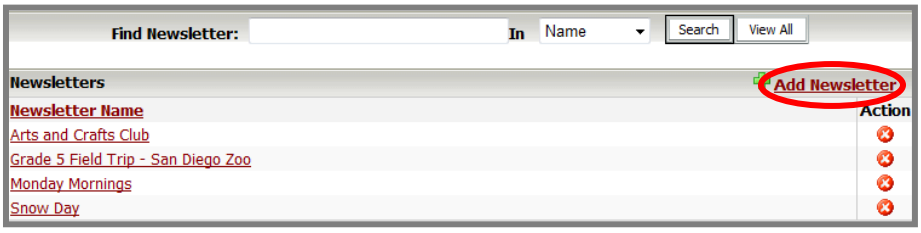
Manage Newsletters

The **Manage Newsletters** section allows you to perform various changes on your newsletters profile. You may:

- Add a newsletter
- Edit a newsletter
- Delete a newsletter
- Search for a newsletter
- Manage messages
- Add Subscribers

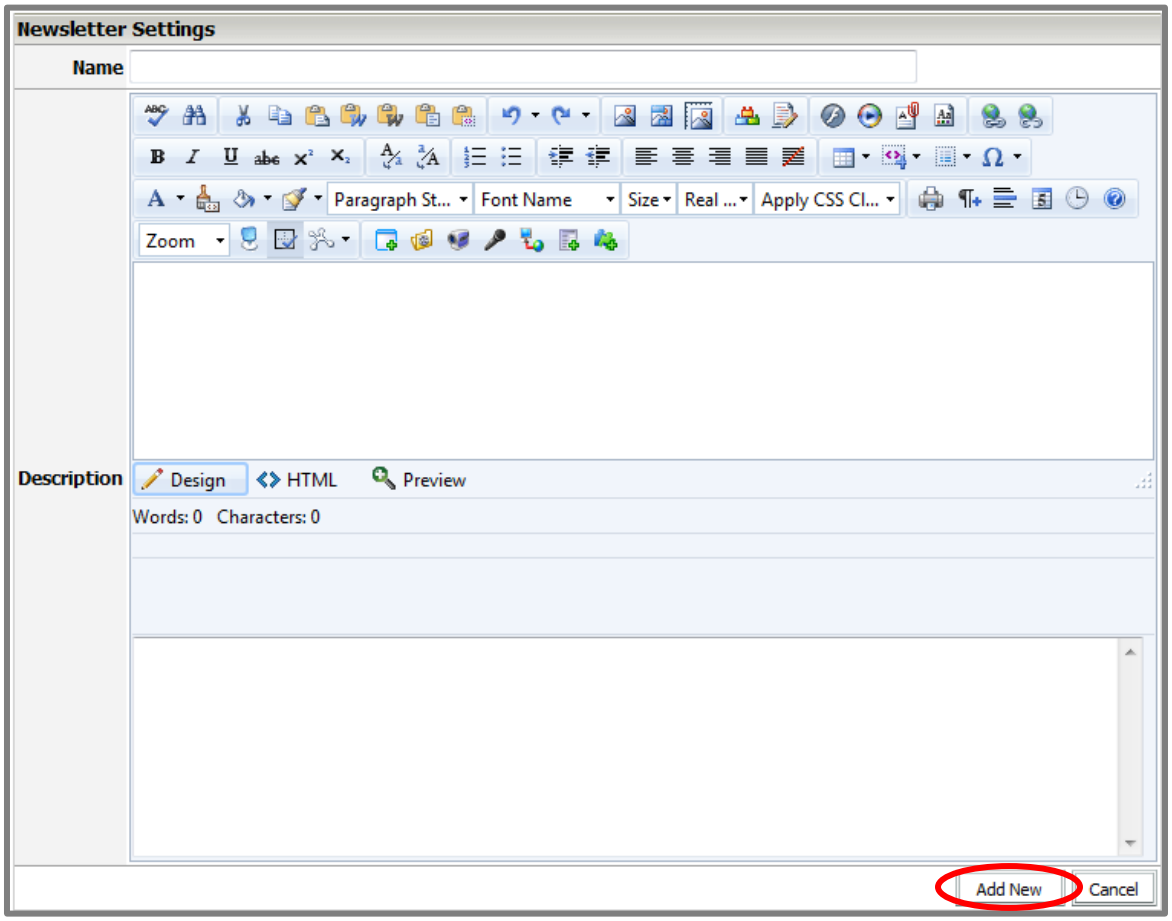
Add a Newsletter

To create a newsletter, click **Add Newsletter**.



Clicking on this link will lead you to a page containing SharpSchool's Content Editor. Here, you may **Name** and insert a **Description** of your newsletter.

When completed, simply click on **Add New**. Click **Cancel** to discard changes.

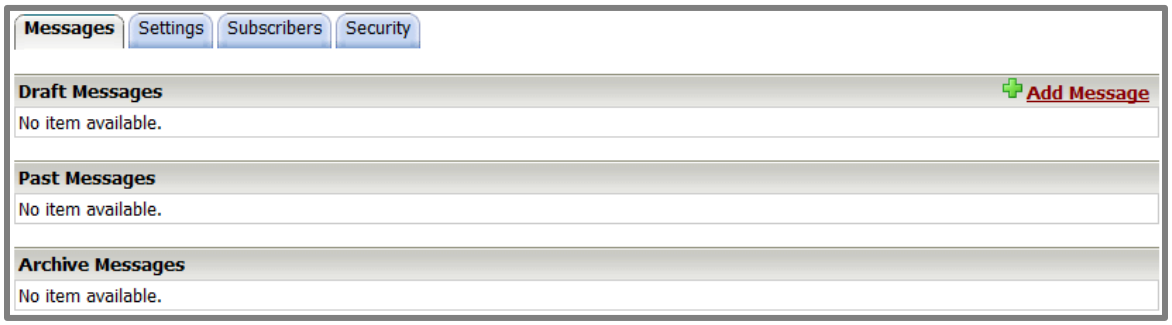


Edit a Newsletter

When you select a newsletter in the **Manage Newsletters** section, you will be directed to a page displaying newsletter settings.

This page features the tabs below:

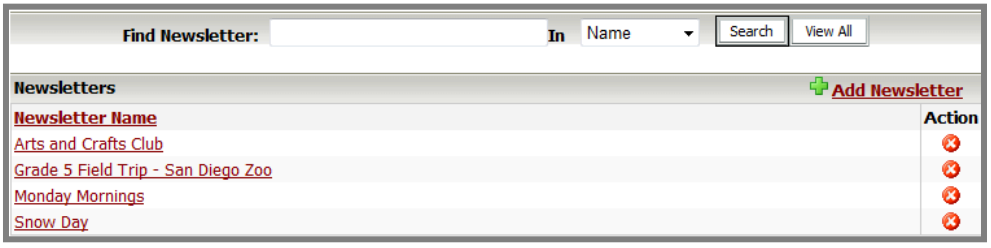
1) **Messages**
2) **Settings**
3) **Subscribers**
4) **Security**



To edit a newsletter, first select the desired newsletter. Ensure that you are on the **Settings** tab. Here you may change the title and content by making use of the Rich Text Editor. For a detailed explanation of this feature, refer to *Appendix A* of SharpSchool's manuals. Once you have made the desired changes, you may click the **Update**. To remove changes, click **Cancel**.

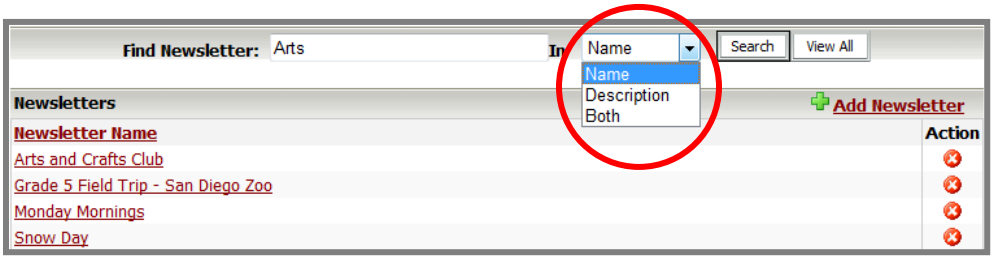
Delete a Newsletter

Once you are on the Newsletter page, click on the icon in the **Action** column to delete the corresponding newsletter.



Search for a Newsletter

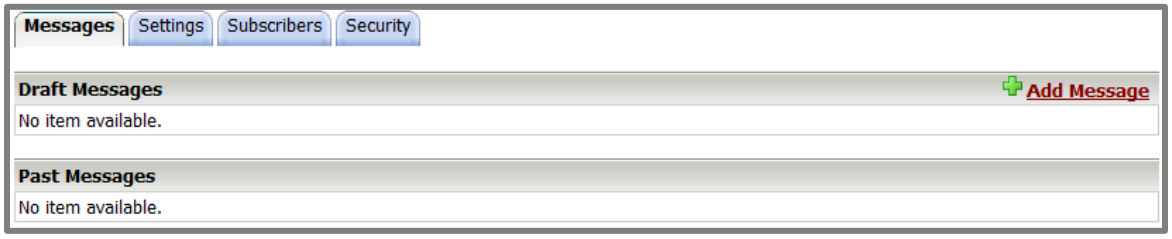
On the Newsletter page, you will see blank search bar next to a field named **Find Newsletters**. Here you may enter keywords that correspond to the title or the content of the newsletter you are looking for. You can search by name, description or both.



Click **Search** to execute your personalized search. To see all newsletters, click on **View All**.

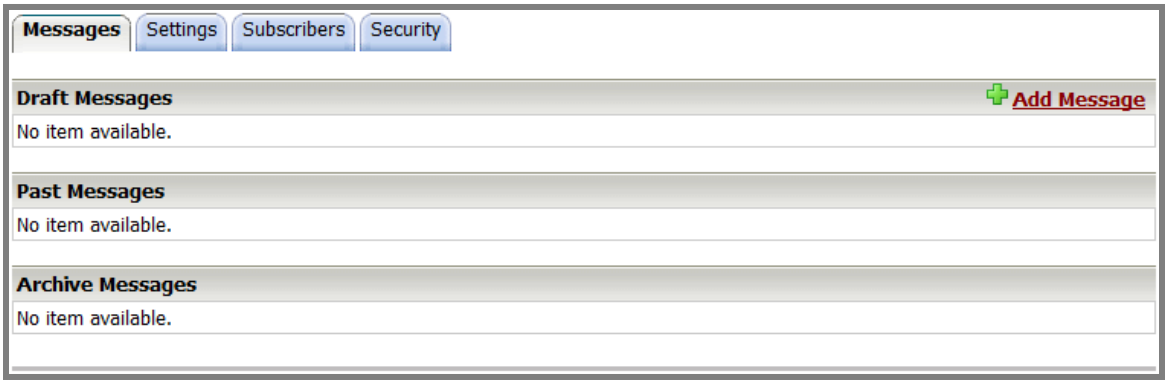
Messages

When you select a newsletter, the first tab under **Manage Newsletters** is **Messages**. When you select a newsletter, you will be directed to a page displaying newsletter settings. Selecting the **Messages** tab will bring you to a page displaying draft and past messages. You can also add messages here.



Draft Messages contains messages that have not been published. This could be either because they have been saved but not scheduled for release, because they have been scheduled for a later date and time or because they are currently being sent. Unscheduled saved messages are marked as **Draft** under the Status column, whereas messages that have a scheduled send time are marked as **Scheduled**.

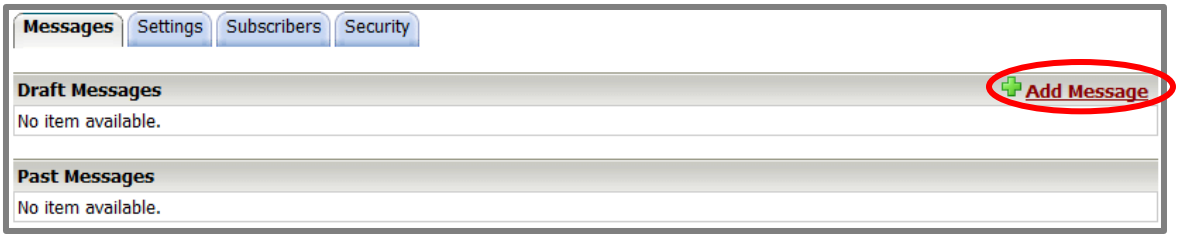
Past Messages contains messages that have already been published. Columns titled **Publish Time** and **Action** give the exact publishing time, and an option to copy the message respectively.



You may add, delete, copy, or edit a message.

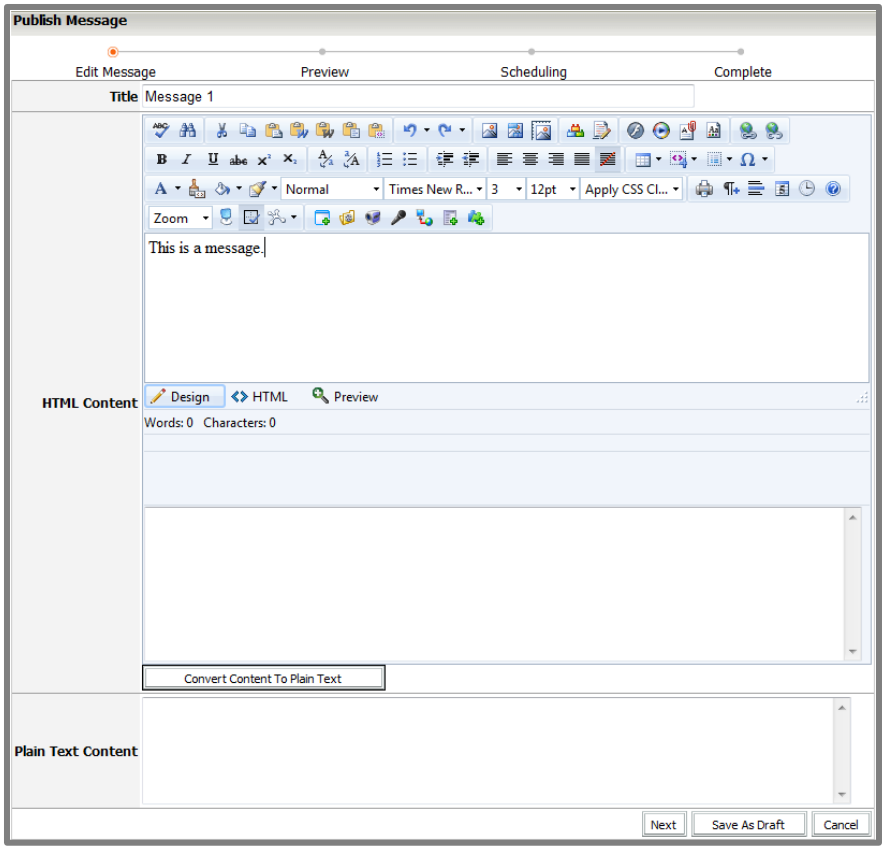
i) Adding a Message

Click **Add Message** to bring up SharpSchool's content editor. Here you may draft a new message.

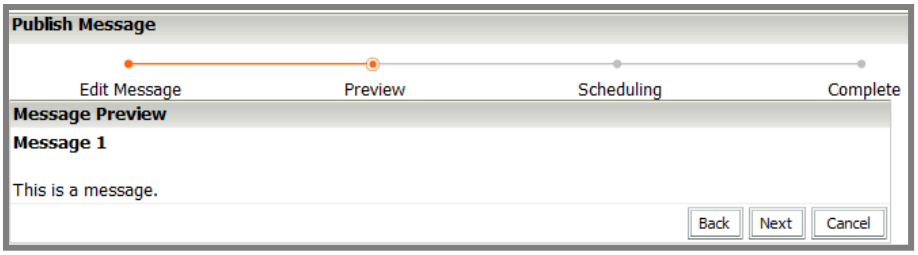


Embedded in the newsletter module is a visually driven tracking system that allows authors to systematically view the steps pertaining to the publications of the newsletters.

a) **Title:** Fill in the title of your message.
b) **HTML Content:** Fill in your content of your message which you want readers to see.
c) **Covert Content to Plain Text:** This option takes the HTML content and then converts it to plain text in the box below where you can make changes if needed.



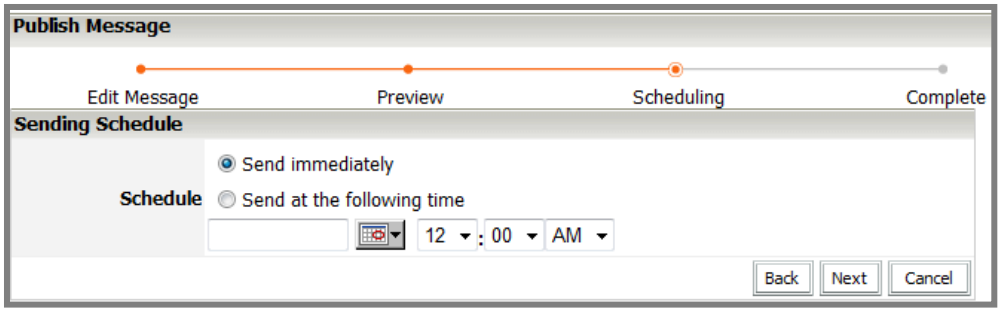
Once you have filled out the information, click **Next**. If you want to work on your message later click **Save As Draft**. If you have clicked **Next** you will now be shown a preview of your message as it will appear to viewers.



If you are not satisfied with the newsletter, you may hit the **Back** button to edit or the **Cancel** button to cancel sending the message and return to the **Messages** screen. Selecting **Back** will redirect you to the previous page where you can modify the content and title of your message.

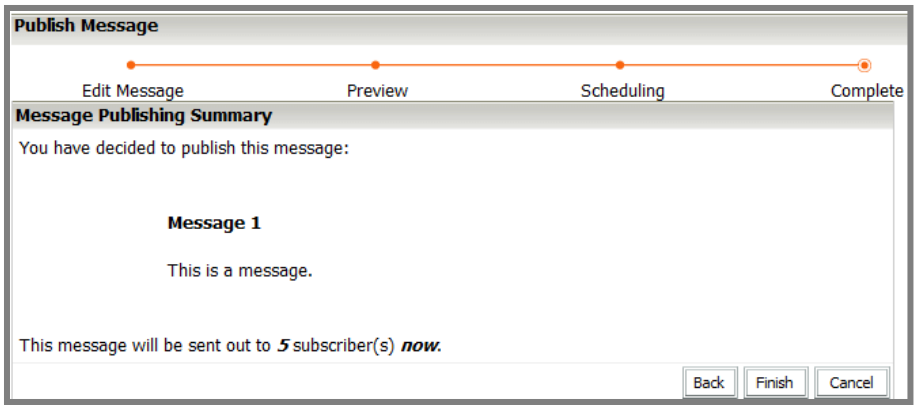
Selecting **Cancel** will redirect you to the main **Messages** tab and list your message as **Draft** under the **Status** column.

If you are happy with your message, click **Next** to proceed. This will bring you to a scheduling page where you can choose the date and time for the message to be sent.

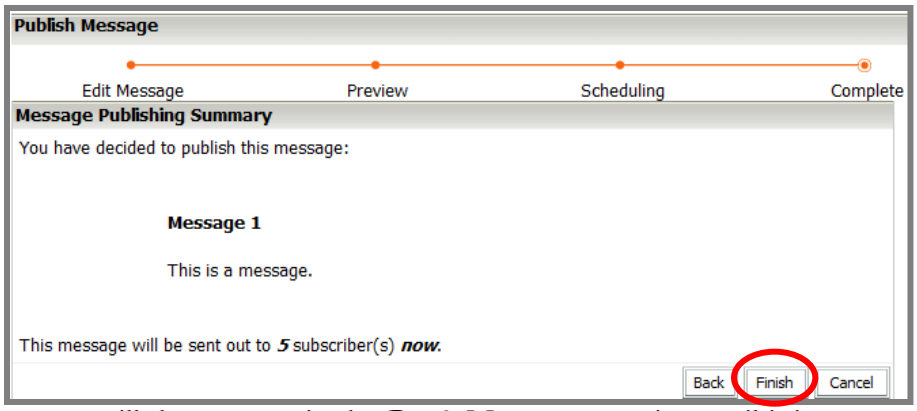


If you would like to release this message immediately, choose **Send immediately**. Otherwise, choose **Send at the Following Time** and fill in the required fields.

Click **Next** to view the **Message Publishing Summary**. This will give you a preview of the message, the timing of release (if scheduled for a later date and time) and the number of subscribers who will receive the message.



To deliver the message, click **Finish**.



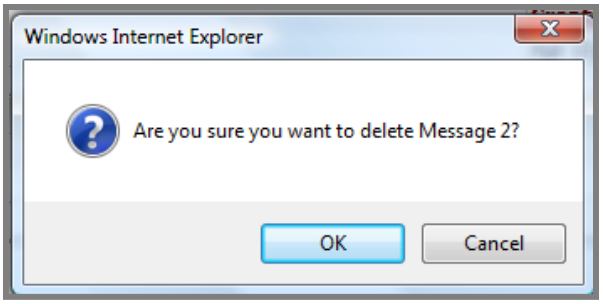
The message will then appear in the **Draft Messages** section until it is sent out. Once it has been sent it will appear in the **Past Messages** section.

Note: If you choose to send the message immediately, the message will be sent within one hour of submission. The delivery time varies based on the size of the message and the number of subscribers.

ii) Deleting a message

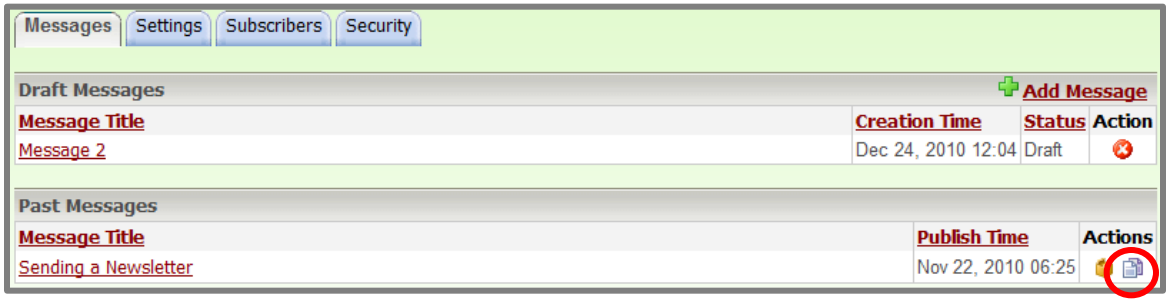
A message in the Draft Messages section can be deleted by simply clicking the icon that appears in the **Action** column.

A window will pop up asking you to click **OK** to confirm you wish to delete the message, or **Cancel** to keep it.



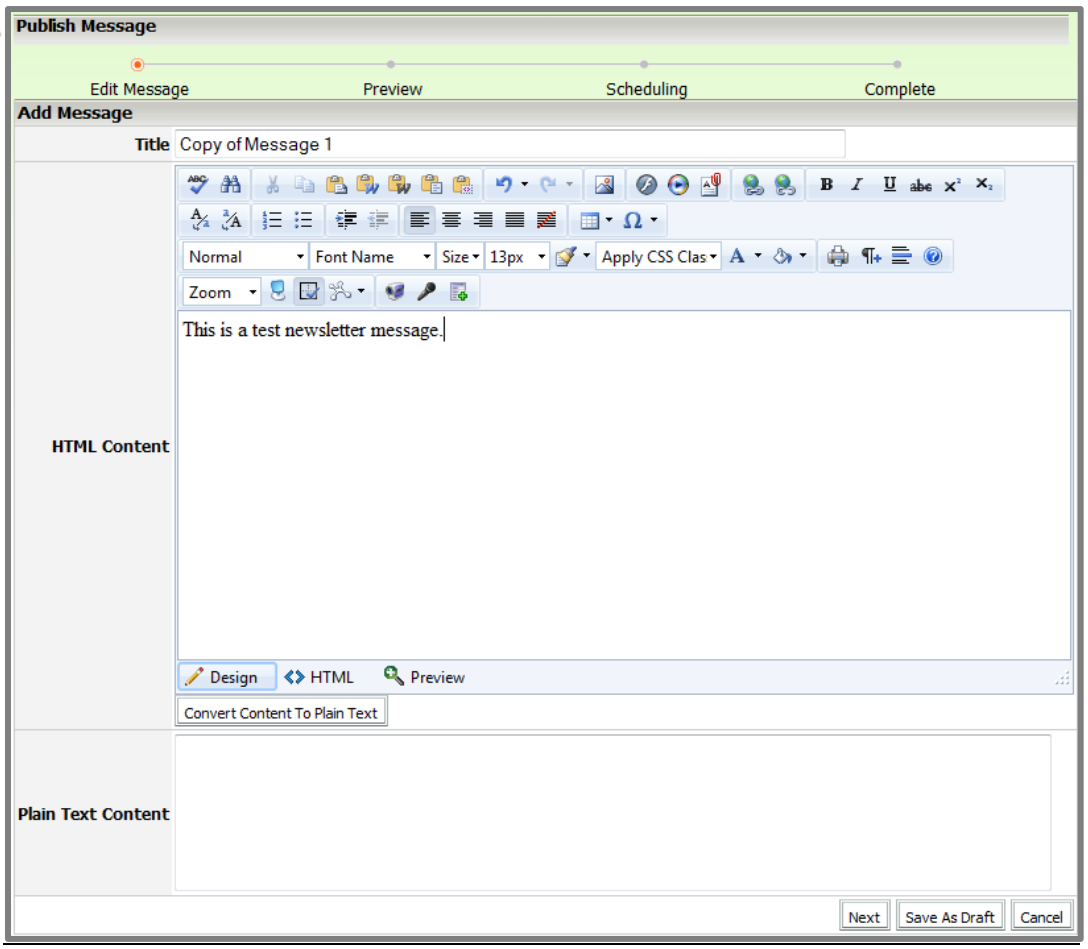
iii) Copying a message

A message in the **Past Messages** section can be copied by simply clicking on the icon under the **Action** column.



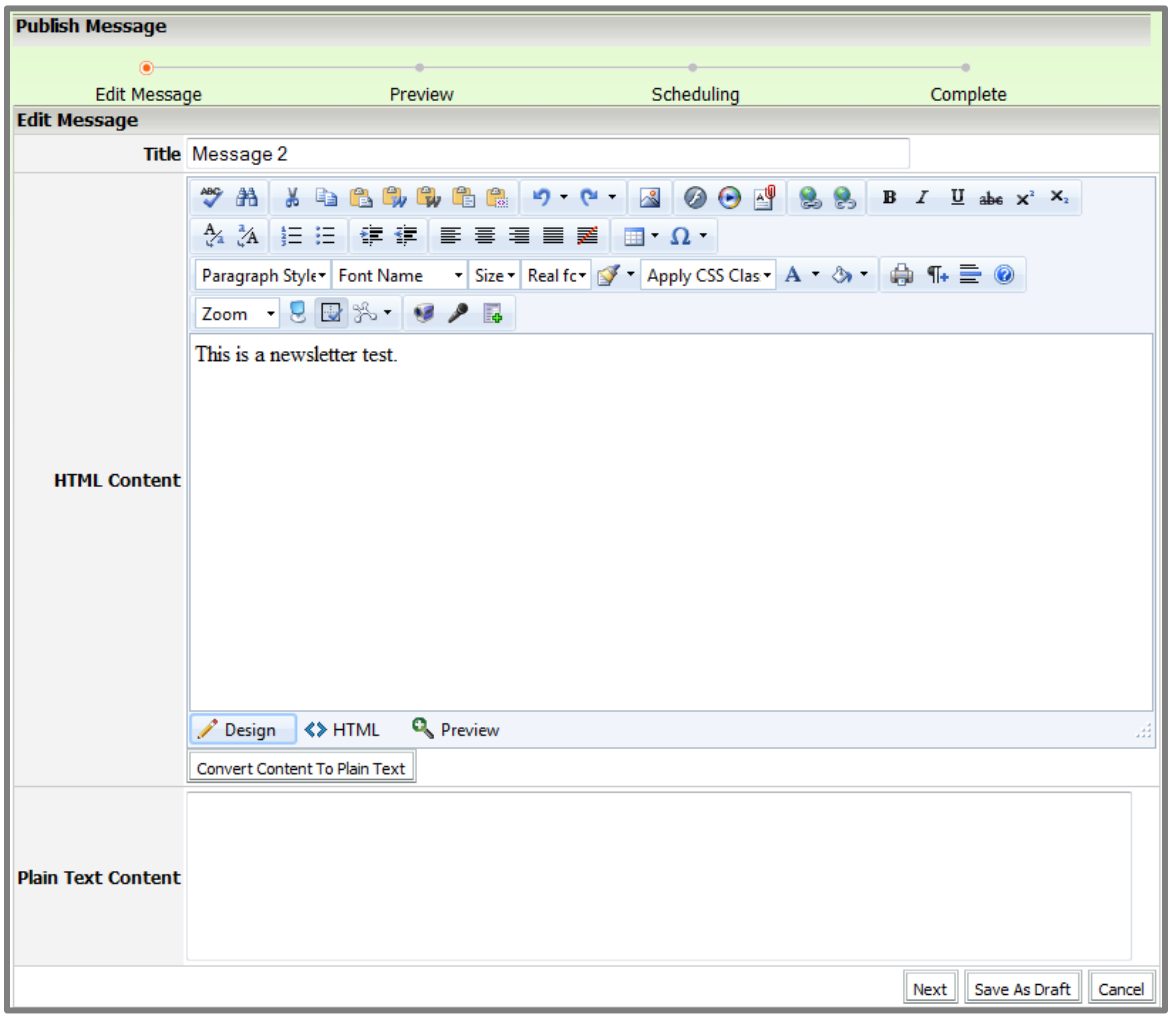
When you click on the icon, the content editor will load. The content is duplicated from the message you want to copy.

Note: The title has **Copy of** added at the beginning.



iv) Editing a Message

You can edit a message in the **Draft Messages** section by clicking on it and making the desired changes.

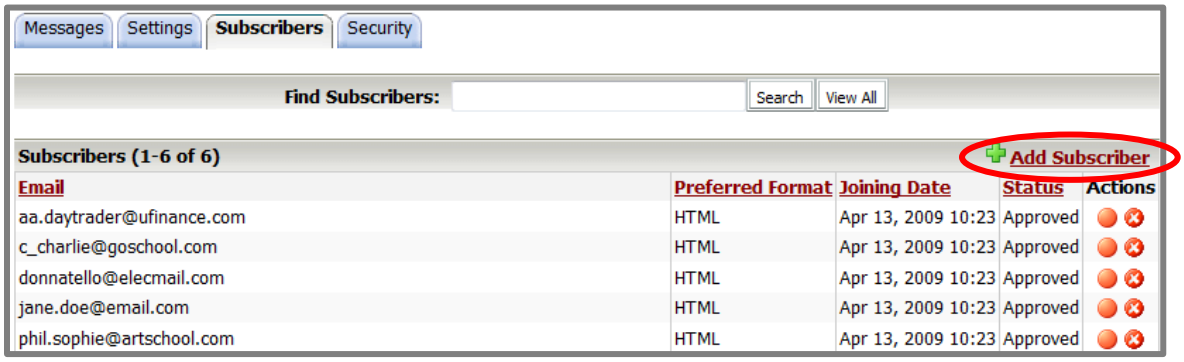


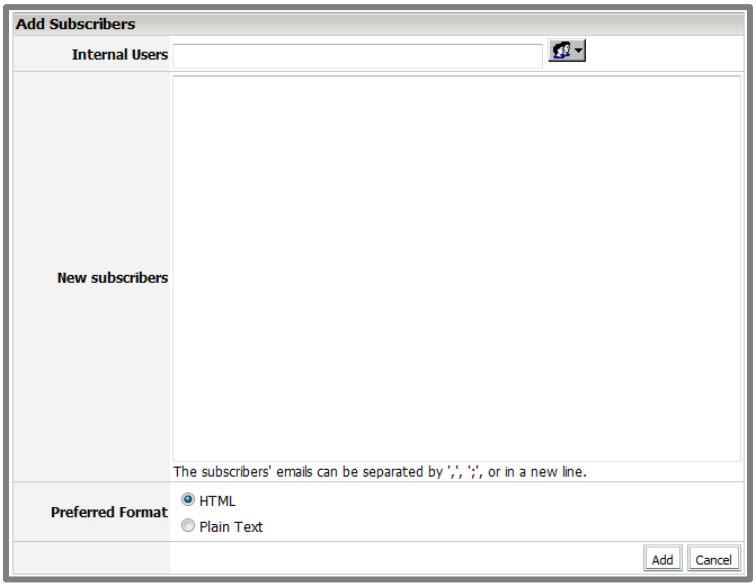
Subscribers

The third tab under the **Manage Newsletters** section is **Subscribers**. On the **Subscribers** tab you may add, reject, delete or find subscribers. You may view the subscription status of subscribers under this tab.

i) Add a subscriber

To add a subscriber, click **Add Subscriber**.





You may add internal users by selecting the button. External users may be added by entering their email addresses into the **New Subscribers** field.

These manually entered e-mail addresses will automatically be approved and added to the subscriber list.

ii) Reject a subscriber

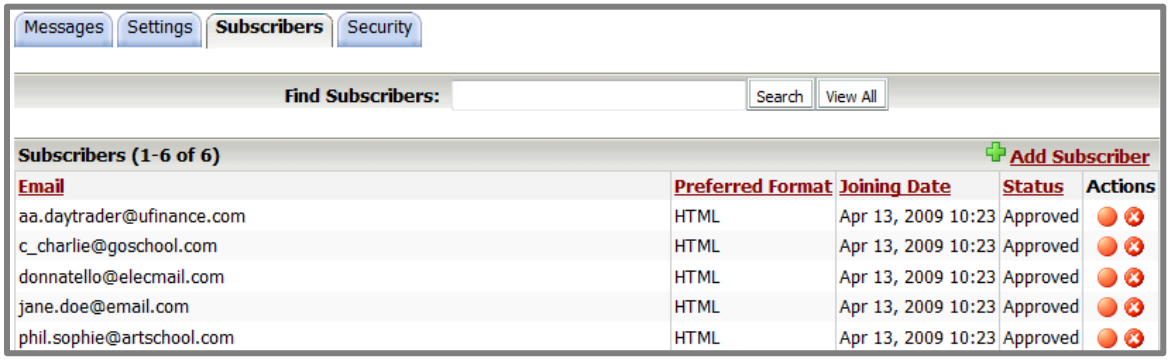
If you want to reject a subscription, you may click on the icon that appears under the **Action** column on the **Subscriber** page.

iii) Delete a subscriber

Under the **Actions** column, click to delete a subscriber. A window will pop up for you to confirm that you want to delete this subscriber.

iv) Find a subscriber

You will notice a blank search bar next to a field named **Find Subscribers**.



Here, you may enter keywords that correspond to the subscriber's email address. Once you have inserted the keyword(s), click the **Search** button. If, at any point, you wish to view all the email addresses subscribed to the newsletter, click the **View All** button located next to the **Search** button. Clicking **Subscribers** will sort the email addresses alphabetically. Each additional click will reverse the order that newsletter names are sorted (i.e. from A to Z and then from Z to A). You may similarly sort by **Joining Date** or subscription **Status**.

v) View subscription status

Under this column, each subscriber falls under one of the following categories: **Unsubscribed**, **Approved**, **Unapproved** or **Rejected**.

Unsubscribed refers to a subscriber who does not wish to continue subscribing to a specific newsletter.

Approved refers to a subscriber who has been successfully added to the list of subscribers.

Unapproved refers to a subscriber who has signed up to receive the newsletter has not yet verified their email address.

Rejected refers to a subscriber that has been declined subscription status.

Manage Security

The Security section of the Newsletters module is managed in the same manner as the Security section for all other SharpSchool modules.

The steps to access **Security** settings:

a) Go to the Newsletter Administration Page (*Refer to the Administration Section on Page 4*)

b) Click **Manage Security**

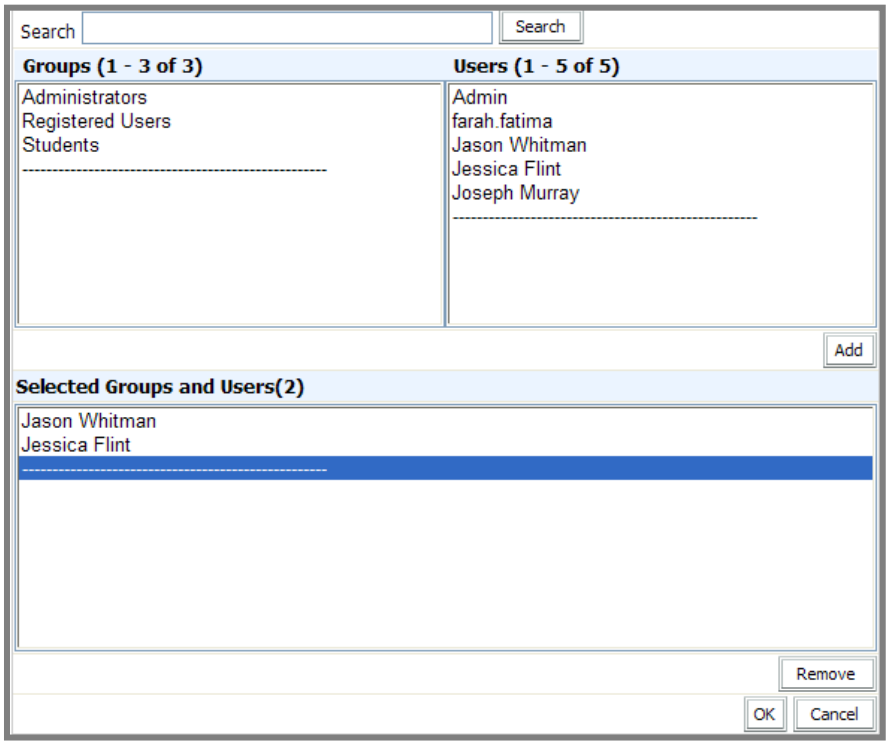
Roles

Roles	What it Allows You to Do
Administrator	Full control over newsletters. Can add newsletters, delete newsletters, send messages from existing newsletters, and configure permissions all newsletters or for individual newsletters
Author	Same as above but with no ability to configure permissions
Browser	Can view newsletter messages

Direct Permissions

When you click on the **Direct Permissions** tab, you can assign security permissions for the newsletters to groups and users.

First click **Add** to select the users to grant permissions to. The following window will pop up:



From this window select the users or groups you'd like to grant permissions to by clicking their name and clicking Add. When you have selected your users, click **OK**.

Controlling Permissions Granted to Users

To individually assign permissions to each user, click on the ⊞ beside their name. From here you can assign specific permissions

Permission	What it Allows You to Do
Create	Can add newsletters
Delete	Can delete newsletters
Read	Can view newsletter messages
Write	Can make changes to messages
Full Control	All of the above, as well as the ability to assign permissions to others

Actual Permissions

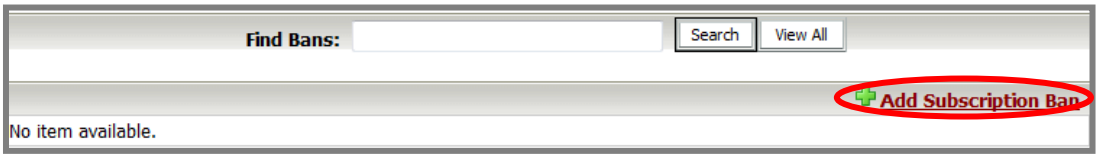
Actual Permissions allows you to view what permissions specific users have on your Newsletters. Users higher up the security hierarchy may already have permissions to your Newsletters. Users with entire site permissions (or higher tiers of security hierarchy) may have permissions to your Newsletters if you have the **Allow Inheritable Permissions From Parent to Propagate to This Object** checkbox selected on the **Direct Permissions** screen.

Manage Settings

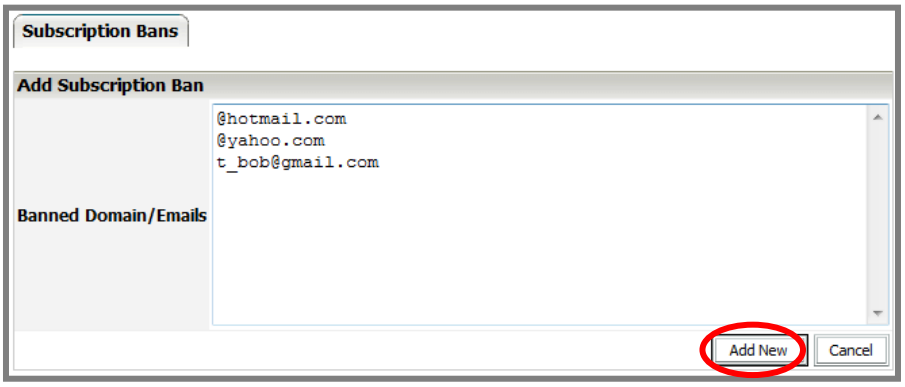
This section allows you to find, add or remove a subscription ban. With a subscription ban you can prevent individual email addresses or entire email domains from subscribing to your newsletter.

Add a Subscription Ban

1) Click on **Add Subscription Ban**.



2) Click on **Add New** to activate a subscription ban on the domains or email addresses you wish to ban. To discard, click on **Cancel**.

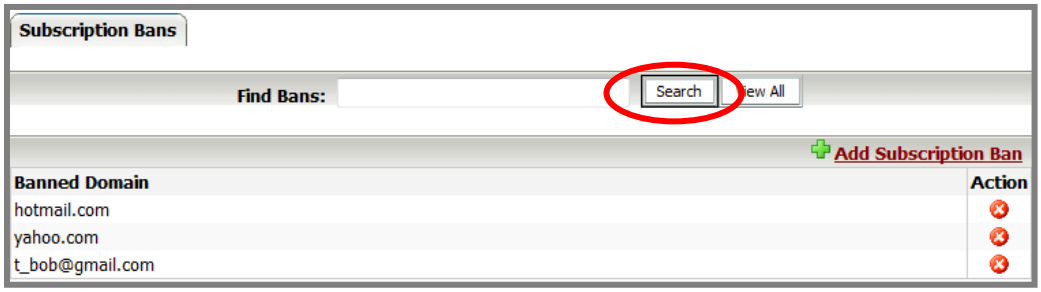


Remove a Subscription Ban

Under the **Actions** column, click to remove a subscription ban. A window pop up asking you to confirm your change. To confirm, click **OK**.

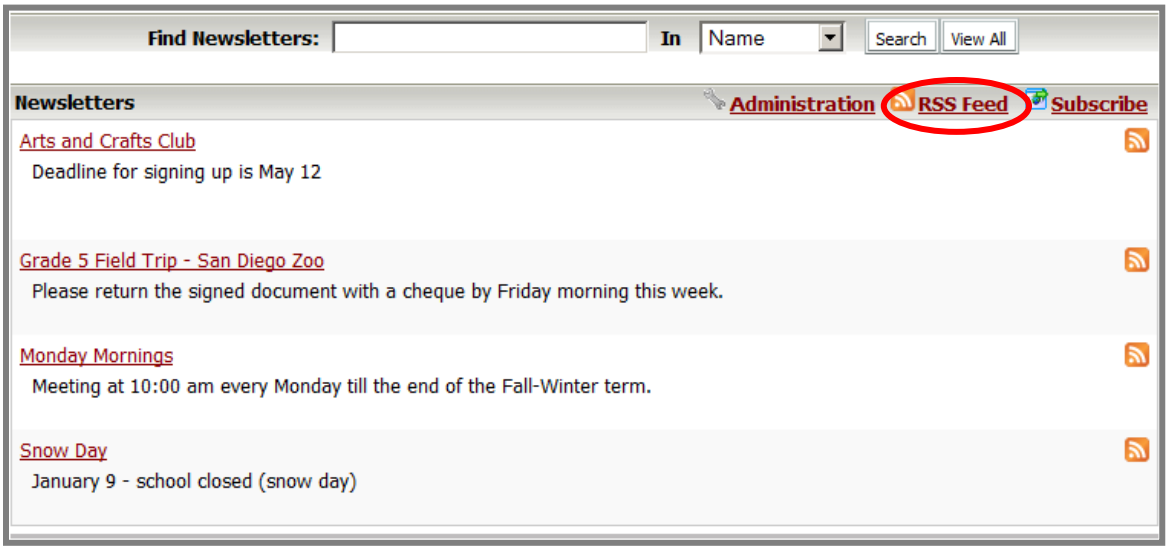
Find a Subscription Ban

To find a subscription ban, simply enter keywords into the blank search bar and click **Search**. To view all subscription bans, click **View All**.



RSS Feed

Once you are on the Newsletter page, click on the **RSS Feed** link. This can be found on the title bar of the **Newsletters** box.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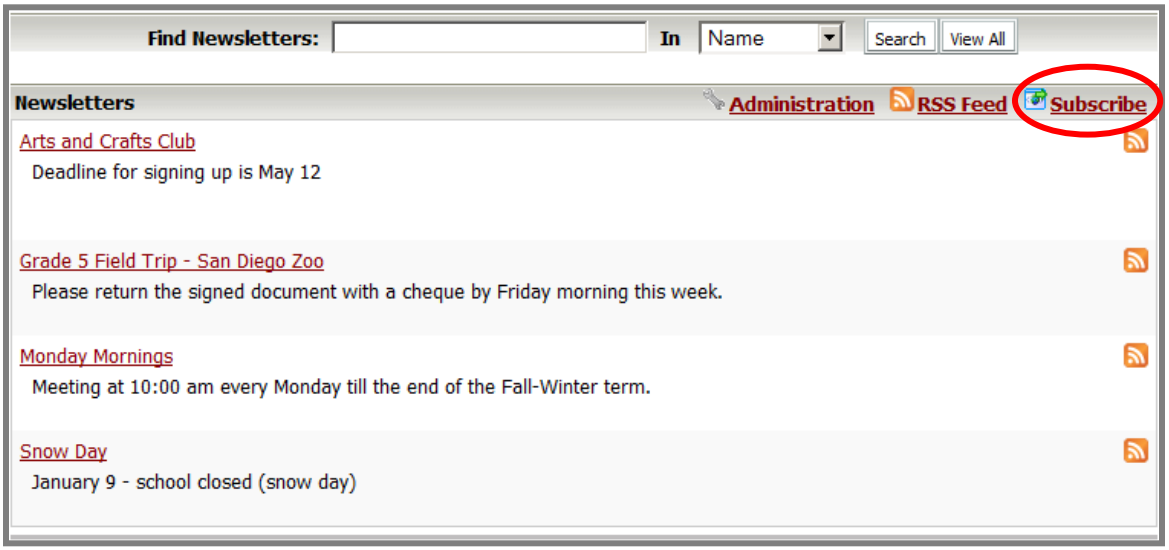
Please return the signed document with a cheque by Friday morning this week.
Monday Mornings
Meeting at 10:00 am every Monday till the end of the Fall-Winter term.
Snow Day
January 9 - school closed (snow day)

Subscribe

To subscribe to a newsletter, click **Subscribe** on the **Newsletters** page. This can be found on the title bar of the **Newsletters** box along with the icon.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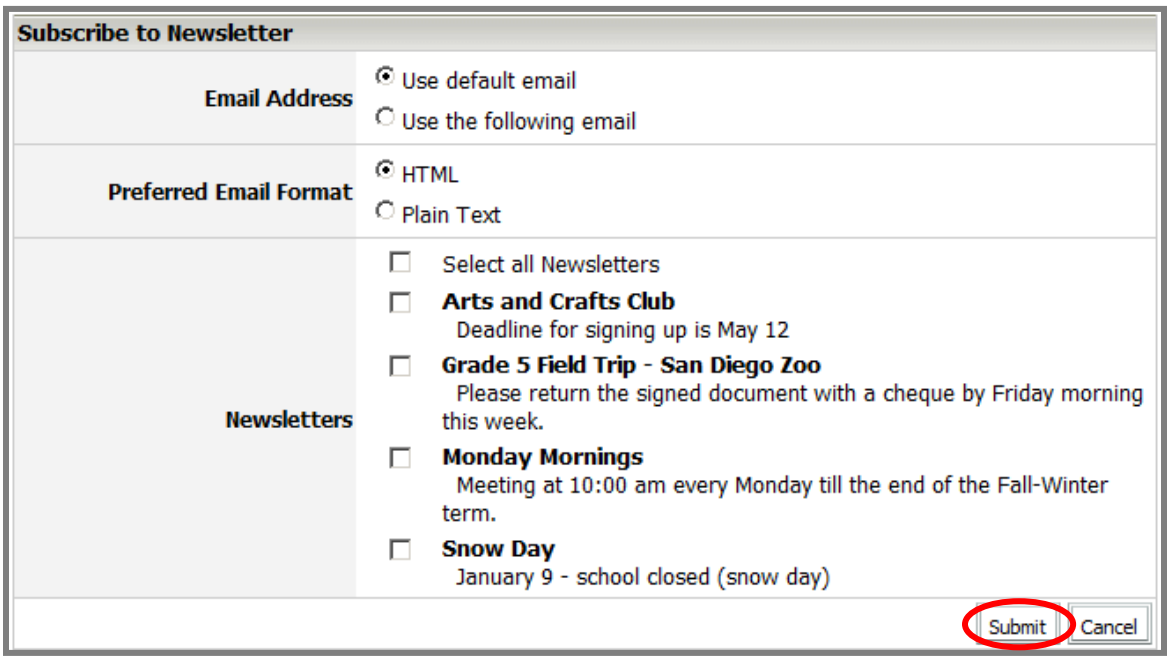
Snow Day
January 9 - school closed (snow day)

A tabulated form of all available newsletters appears. To subscribe, click on any newsletter and then click **Subscribe**.

A page will appear that allows you to enter key information needed before subscription can become active. Here users may choose which newsletter(s) they wish to receive. To select all newsletters, click the box beside **Select all newsletters**. Subscribers may select whether to choose to receive newsletter as an HTML or plain text email.

When completed click **Submit**. To remove changes, click **Cancel**.


Subscribe to Newsletter
Email Address
Use default email
Use the following email
Preferred Email Format
HTML
Plain Text
Newsletters
Select all Newsletters
Arts and Crafts Club
Deadline for signing up is May 12
Grade 5 Field Trip - San Diego Zoo
Please return the signed document with a cheque by Friday morning this week.
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Meeting at 10:00 am every Monday till the end of the Fall-Winter term.
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January 9 - school closed (snow day)
Submit
Cancel

You will receive a confirmation message within one hour of submission.

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